

**REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 9, 2018**

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Washington, Georgia, held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, April 9, 2018, beginning at 3:40 PM at the Edward Pope Conference Center. Mayor Ames Barnett presided.

Present were: Mayor Barnett and Council members Armour, Armour, Cullars, Mahoney, Scarborough and Tutt. Also present were City Administrator Bailey, City Clerk Danner and City Attorney Fleming.

Visitors present are listed in the minutes of the Work Session held on April 9, 2018.

City Attorney Fleming opened the meeting in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES APPROVED: On motion by Scarborough, second by R. Armour, council approved the minutes from previous meetings 6 to 0.

MEETING AGENDA: On motion by R. Armour, second by T. Armour, council approved the meeting agenda 5 to 1, adding a seating chart matter by the Mayor and moving the signed in visitor to the beginning spot on the agenda. Council member Cullars voted against the motion.

BRADLEY GRIFFIN: Bradley Griffin, Republican candidate for the 10th District U.S. Congress seat, introduced himself to those present and asked for their support in the May 22 election. Griffin is running against incumbent Jody Hice.

MAYOR'S TOPICS:

STATE OF THE CITY: Mayor Barnett reviewed with council and citizens a PowerPoint presentation showing the state of the city from 2011 until 2017. Major points were: Capital Reserves are up to \$894,644; over 17% of the city's debt has been retired since 2011; city's net worth has increased over 9%; expenditures are down some \$3.3 million; and, cash flow has increased because of increased efforts to reduce expenses and better collection processes.

COMMUNITY GARDEN: Mayor Barnett advised of a plan for a community garden at the old WWCHS practice field which already has irrigation available and is fenced in. The proposed garden section will be divided into plot which can be rented for a \$25 deposit fee and \$5 monthly water charge. Deposit will be refunded at the end of the growing season if plot has been cleared.

Council members from District 1 voiced concern that no council input had been sought in making these plans and further that this would be another added cost to citizens. Council member Mahoney advised that Parks and Recreation already had a community garden established.

On motion by R. Armour to approve a community garden at the old WWCHS practice field site, second by Scarborough, council voted 2-3-1. Voting against the motion were Cullars, Mahoney and Tutt. Council member T. Armour abstained.

Mayor Barnett thanked Marcus Dill and Ray Owens for the recent community Arbor Day picnic.

Mayor Barnett also advised of an Affordable Housing Workshop to be held at the Pope Center on April 14, 2018.

CITY ATTORNEY: City Attorney Fleming asked for council guidance on proposed change to the City Charter Section 7 which deals with council salary payments. It was noted that this is the second of the required council action on this matter by Homerule. Council member Scarborough made a motion to approve charter change, second by Council member R. Armour, council voted 3-3-1. Voting against the motion were Council members Cullars, Mahoney and Tutt. Mayor Barnett voted for the motion, breaking the tie vote. Resolution follows:

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND SECTION 7 OF THE MUNICIPAL CHARTER OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, GEORGIA

WHEREAS, OCGA 36-35-3 grants the governing authority of each municipal corporation the legislative power to amend its municipal charter; and

WHEREAS, the City of Washington desires to amend Section 7 of the Municipal Charter of the City to allow for compensation for elected officials to be paid in concurrence with the City employee payroll schedule;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Washington as follows:

- 1) Section 7. Compensation of mayor and council. Of the Municipal Charter shall be amended to read as follows:
The mayor of the City of Washington, Georgia, shall receive an annual salary of \$7,200.00 to be paid in equal payments at the same interval as established for payroll for city employees, and each of the councilmembers of the said City of Washington, Georgia, shall receive an annual salary of \$3,600.00 to be paid in equal payment at the same interval as established for payroll for city employees, said salaries to be paid out of the city treasury. The mayor and council shall receive an additional \$100.00 per month is he/she has completed 120 hours of certification from the Georgia Municipal Association. The mayor and any member of council shall also be paid any travel or other expense incurred on behalf of the city.
- 2) Pursuant to OCGA 36-35-3, the proposed amendment shall be published in the official organ of Wilkes County once a week for three weeks within a period of 60 days immediately preceding its final adoption. The notice shall state that a copy of the proposed amendment is on file in the City Clerk’s office and in the office of the Clerk of Court of the Superior Court of Wilkes County.
- 3) Pursuant to OCGA 36-35-5, upon completion of publication, a copy of the amendment, a copy of the publicized notice, and an affidavit of a duly authorized representative of the newspaper in which the notice was published shall be filed with the Secretary of State’s office and in the office of the Clerk of Court of the Superior Court of Wilkes County.

City Attorney Fleming also asked for council guidance on authorization for Mayor Barnett to sign a letter to begin the process to opt out of the city’s share of SEPA power (hydro power). This is a 25 month process, but there is a possibility of this timeframe being shorten. On motion by Tutt, second by Scarborough, council approved 5 to 1 authorizing the Mayor to sign the letter. Council member Cullars abstained from voting.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES POURING LICENSES FOR TONYA BINNS, DBA: VEGAS BAR AND GRILL: City Clerk Danner presented a request for a Distilled Spirits Pouring and Alcohol Pouring license from Tonya Binns; DBA: Vegas Bar and Grill at 202 Whitehall Street. On motion by Tutt, second by Cullars, council approved 6 to 0 the request.

COUNCIL TOPICS:
MAHONEY: Council member Mahoney asked for a revision to the current Ethics policy to have an attorney panel to review any ethics charges. The City Attorney will get this information to the city clerk to be forwarded to council for a May vote on the matter.

Council member Mahoney also asked that the City Attorney review reducing the amount of contract which would require a bidding process.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR TOPICS: City Administrator Bailey asked that council re-consider their vote on the community garden. The garden would be a benefit to everyone and a chance for everyone to come together and to work together. This project would require no city dollars to be spent, but time is of the essence as it is now planting season.

Bailey presented a request for use of the square from Beta Sigma Phi for a Pedaling for Paws event to be held September 7, 2018, from 5 to 8:30 PM to benefit the Animal Shelter. On motion by R. Armour, second by Tutt, council approved request 6 to 0.

Bailey also presented a request to close a portion of a city street for a Trike-A-Thon to benefit St. Jude’s on April 26, 2018, from 9:45 AM until 11:45 AM. On motion by T. Armour, second by Tutt, council approved request 6 to 0.

Bailey presented a request for speed bumps on Court Street near the Wilkes Telephone office building. On motion by Tutt, second by Mahoney, council approved 4 to 2. Council members Cullars and Scarborough abstained.

SEATING CHART REQUEST: Mayor Barnett requested council approval of a seating chart from left to right of: Mahoney, R. Armour, Tutt, T. Armour, Cullars and Scarborough. Request failed due to lack of motion and second.

On motion by Mahoney, second by Cullars, council approved meeting adjournment at 4:28 PM.

MAYOR

CLERK

